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Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Report of the President of the Council on consultations with the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Information submitted by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system on their activities with regard to the implementation of the Declaration

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2012/22, the Economic and Social Council requested the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact with the Chair of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples on the matters considered in that resolution and to report thereon to the Council.

2. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 67/127, the General Assembly requested that the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations examine and review conditions in each Non-Self-Governing Territory so as to take appropriate measures to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of the Territories. In the same resolution, the Assembly commended the Council for its debate and resolution on the question and requested that the Council continue to consider, in consultation with the Special Committee, appropriate measures for the coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system in implementing the relevant resolutions of the Assembly.

3. The following 16 Territories are under the purview of the Special Committee: American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands (Malvinas),[1] Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands and Western Sahara. Information submitted in response to a request to the specialized agencies and the international organizations associated with the United Nations to provide an account of their activities in relation to Non-Self-Governing Territories is set out below.

II. Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international organizations associated with the United Nations

4. According to the information received, during the period under review, several specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system continued to provide support to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories pursuant to the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Special Committee.

A. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

5. In August 2012, pursuant to resolution 662(XXXIV), adopted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) at its thirty-fourth session, Bermuda was admitted as an associate member of ECLAC. Consequently, as of February 2013, 7 of the 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories were associate members of ECLAC: Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands and United States Virgin Islands.

[1] A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (see ST/CS/SER.A/42).

6. The Commission continued to provide advisory services to the Government of Montserrat with the preparatory work for geothermal energy exploration.

7. In November 2011, at the request of the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands, ECLAC conducted a national training workshop on capacity-building for the collection of data. The workshop targeted Government officials and other relevant stakeholders and sought to improve capacity at the national level to develop social policies, in particular a national policy on gender to promote gender equality through the collection of relevant data. ECLAC has also provided advisory services on an ongoing basis to the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands regarding institutional strengthening of its Gender Affairs Department.

8. Non-Self-Governing Territories regularly participated in the technical meetings and regional activities related to the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme. Representatives of Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands attended six meetings that focused on the core aspects of the Programme, namely, national accounts and consumer prices (see annex). As part of the global process of the Programme, ECLAC also provided technical support to Anguilla and Montserrat with the completion of their respective national obligations related to price statistics and national accounts components.

9. During 2011 ECLAC supported the participation of the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands in regional workshops that helped to build capacity in respect of data dissemination and the Millennium Development Goals.

10. The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean provides, when available, information on these Territories in both ad hoc and recurrent studies, and in publications such as the *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean* and the *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean*.

B. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

11. In the Pacific region, representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (American Samoa and New Caledonia) participated in a regional workshop on the theme "Priority adaptations to climate change for Pacific fisheries and aquaculture: reducing risks and capitalizing on opportunities", organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in Noumea from 5 to 8 June 2012; and in a Pacific islands regional consultation organized by FAO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community on the development of guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries, held in Noumea from 12 to 14 June 2012. Representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (American Samoa, Guam, New Caledonia and Tokelau) also participated in a regional workshop organized by FAO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community on aquatic biosecurity, and aquaculture data and statistics held in Nadi, Fiji, from 1 to 6 October 2012.

12. A number of consultations between FAO (through its Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, based in Samoa) and officials of the Tokelau Government were conducted in 2012 in preparation for the FAO country programming framework for 2013-2017. FAO supported the participation of Tokelau in the United Nations

Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012. Tokelau participated in the following regional workshops: the 15th annual FAO round-table meeting on agriculture trade and sustainable development, held in Wellington from 3 to 7 September 2012; a regional validation workshop for the Pacific multi-country country programming framework 2013-2017, held in Nadi on 4 and 5 December 2012; and a regional consultation on increasing local food production in response to high food prices, held in Nadi on 6 December 2012.

C. United Nations Environment Programme

13. While the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) does not specifically provide assistance to any of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, its programmes focus on overall capacity-building and technological support for economies in transition. It has also focused its work on six cross-cutting thematic priorities, namely: climate change; disasters and conflicts; ecosystems management; environmental governance; harmful substances and hazardous waste; and resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production.

14. Following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Brazil in 2012, UNEP was equipped with a stronger mandate for providing capacity-building and strengthening its regional presence, in order to assist countries, upon request, in the implementation of their national environmental policies. UNEP is strengthening the implementation of its distinctive role in environmental leadership by catalysing and promoting international cooperation and action; providing early warning and policy advice based on sound science; working with the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements to help implement related objectives and commitments; and delivering technological support and capacity-building services in line with country priorities as well as those of the 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories, as relevant.

D. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

15. Three Non-Self-Governing Territories are associate members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), namely, the British Virgin Islands (1983), the Cayman Islands (1999) and Tokelau (2001).

16. Tokelau is one of the 14 Pacific island countries and territories that have participated in the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment. The Assessment is a collaborative work by UNESCO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment with financial support from the Australian Agency for International Development. The Assessment was conducted in Tokelau in late 2012.

17. As part of its Pacific regional programmes, UNESCO supported Tokelau's participation in the 19th consultation meeting of the Pacific Heads of Education Systems held in Nadi on 16 March 2012, in cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, to discuss key regional education sector issues and challenges and to prepare for the Pacific Island Forum Education Ministers' Meeting (May 2012, Port Vila).

18. A capacity-building workshop on education planning for the Caribbean was held in Trinidad and Tobago, from 15 to 18 January 2013. The main purpose of the workshop was to strengthen institutional capacity in strategic education planning, and representatives of Anguilla, Montserrat, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands, among others, attended.

19. The Caribbean Conference on Technical and Vocational Education and Training, held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, from 7 to 9 March 2012 was attended by participants from the following Non-Self-Governing Territories: Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and Montserrat. The Montego Bay Declaration on Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Caribbean was addressed at the Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training held in Shanghai, China, in May 2012. The Latin America and the Caribbean regional conference on advancing the teaching profession, held in Jamaica in November 2012, was attended by participants representing Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and Montserrat.

20. In Tokelau, the Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems programme of UNESCO published a book entitled *Echoes at Fishermen's Rock: Traditional Tokelau Fishing* in December 2012. The book is a translation of the Tokelauan *Hikuleo i te Papa o Tautai*, written exclusively in Tokelauan by Atafu elders and dedicated to succeeding generations of Tokelauans. The book is a hands-on manual about traditional Tokelauan techniques for capturing crabs, birds and, more importantly, fish of both the lagoon and the open ocean. It pays particular attention to traditional protocols, fish behaviour, and the winds, currents, lunar cycles and seasonal variations indicated by the annual rising of named stars and constellations.

21. In addition, Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands continue to be active participants in the "Sandwatch" project of UNESCO, through which school students, teachers and local communities work together in the field to monitor their beach environments, identify and evaluate the threats, problems and conflicts facing them, and develop appropriate sustainable approaches to address these issues.

22. UNESCO has been working with Tokelau for approximately three years on the national women's policy and national youth policy. The national women's policy and accompanying national action plan was completed and endorsed in 2011 and is now under implementation. Final consultations on the national youth policy are ongoing, and the policy is expected to be presented to the General Fono for endorsement in May 2013. UNESCO is assisting Tokelau in joining the Pacific Youth Council as an interim member until such time that Tokelau's national youth policy and national youth council have been formally established. This support will assist Tokelau's participation in the Pacific Development Framework and in regional meetings.

23. UNESCO has been working for the past three years on the development of a cultural policy for Tokelau. Progress in this regard has been very slow. To date, a scoping paper on how the policy could be developed has been prepared and an in-country consultation has been held. More recently, UNESCO has been involved in supporting a report on intangible cultural heritage safeguarding in Tokelau. The project will contribute further to development of the national policy as well as assist in the identification of intangible cultural heritage that is at risk of being lost.

24. An expert from the New Caledonia Direction de la culture, de la condition féminine et de la citoyenneté participated in a workshop on the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, which was held in Beijing in December 2012 and was organized by the International Training Center for the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO.

25. Representatives from the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands participated in a regional capacity-building programme on the theme "Safeguarding the underwater cultural heritage of the Caribbean", held in Port Royal, Jamaica, from 5 to 30 November 2012.

26. World Heritage properties are located in the following Non-Self-Governing Territories: Bermuda (Historic Town of Saint George and Related Fortifications, cultural property inscribed in 2000); New Caledonia (Lagoons of New Caledonia: Reef Diversity and Associated Ecosystems, natural property inscribed in 2008); and Pitcairn (Henderson Island, natural property inscribed in 1988).

27. Whereas nomination files have to be submitted by States parties that have ratified the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the local authorities of those territories are usually involved in preparing the files and the day-to-day management of the properties. Non-Self-Governing Territories also participate in World Heritage Committee sessions and may make statements as part of the State party delegation, such as participants from New Caledonia at the thirty-second session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Quebec City, Canada, in 2008. All the island territories of the Caribbean were invited to attend international and periodic reporting meetings organized with UNESCO, regardless of their status.

28. There are also a number of Non-Self-Governing Territories inscribed on the Tentative Lists of the States parties: Gibraltar (Gorham's Cave Complex, cultural property added in 2012); Saint Helena (Island of Saint Helena, natural property added in 2012); Turks and Caicos Islands (Turks and Caicos Islands, natural property added in 2012); and American Samoa (Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary, natural property added in 2008).

29. Several Non-Self-Governing Territories hold important underwater cultural heritage and/or are profiting from its valorization. Bermuda plans to establish an international shipwreck exploration industry to generate revenues. The Cayman Islands are working towards the research and protection of submerged sites as well as their touristic valorization. Submerged cultural heritage from every period of colonial occupation is known to be present in the waters of Guam, including shipwrecks from the Spanish colonial period, some of which have recently been commercially exploited. New Caledonia boasts many submerged ships; in total, more than 300 large vessels are known to have been lost in its waters. Pitcairn is best known for the story of *The Bounty*, famously associated with one of the most notorious mutinies in British history. *The Bounty* wreck and mutineer village sites on land are therefore culturally very significant for the population. Tokelau has underwater cultural heritage sites that provide testimony to the contacts made by Tokelau with surrounding countries. Samoa will host in Apia in 2014 the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, bringing together over 50 small island developing States. The Conference, for which the preparatory process is ongoing, is a major event that will provide an ideal opportunity to

highlight the importance of the extensive underwater cultural heritage of the small island developing States for their sustainable development.

30. UNESCO is the primary United Nations support agency for Tokelau under the Pacific multi-country United Nations Development Action Framework. It coordinated and led the common country assessment, national consultation and preparation of the national matrix of activities under the Framework. The common country assessment was completed in 2012; the matrix is currently in its final stages and is expected to be presented to the General Fono for endorsement.

E. World Food Programme

31. The World Food Programme (WFP) does not have activities in any of the Non-Self-Governing Territories but supports refugees from Western Sahara in Algeria. Since 1986, WFP has provided assistance totalling around $278 million under successive prolonged refugee and recovery operations, the last of which will run from January 2013 to December 2014.

32. Refugees from Western Sahara are hosted in five camps located in an area that is 30 to 180 km away from the Algerian town of Tindouf, in the harsh, isolated desert environment of south-western Algeria, where temperatures exceed 50°C in the summer, there are frequent sandstorms and dust storms and water is scarce and heavily mineralized. Opportunities for self-reliance are extremely limited, forcing the refugees to rely on international humanitarian assistance for their survival. Despite assistance, malnutrition levels remain a concern. In spite of the difficult living conditions, the refugees are well organized and manage their own society and institutions within the camps.

33. The WFP operation aims at ensuring food security for, and preventing the deterioration of nutritional status and enhancing the capacities of, refugees from Western Sahara in Algeria. The operation is conducted through general food distribution, mother and child health and nutrition programmes and feeding programmes at schools.

34. WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) carried out a joint assessment mission in October 2011, which confirmed that continued food assistance was needed for the refugees and that most of the refugees remained highly dependent on humanitarian aid from the international community for their survival. The WFP operation targets the most vulnerable among the refugees from Western Sahara living in Tindouf. In the absence of a census or formal registration process for refugees by UNHCR, WFP followed the UNHCR planning figure, based on the 2001 census that had not been completed, and distributes 90,000 general food rations and 35,000 supplementary general food rations to the most vulnerable among the refugees. WFP therefore covers the basic food needs of the most vulnerable and helps to support their livelihoods. After more than two decades of continuous collaboration with WFP, distributions are carried out safely within the camps themselves.

35. The level of organization achieved by beneficiaries in respect of the distributions is remarkable. Most of the distribution chain comprises women and beneficiaries organized into groups or family members living in the same

neighbourhood area. The head of each group is in charge of receiving the food at the distribution point and allocating it to the respective families.

36. Over the years, several nutrition surveys have been conducted to address issues that affect people living on basic commodities and in such a hostile environment, with very limited access to fresh produce (vegetable, fruits or diary products). Based on the surveys, WFP and other partners have implemented a cotamon framework for all maternal and child health and nutrition interventions. The latest survey, conducted in November 2012, indicated that while the needs remain high, the activities carried out have had a positive impact on some of the nutritional indicators.

37. WFP provides a corn soya blend, sugar and vegetable oil rations to mothers and lactating women and the nutritive mix "Super CerealPlus" to children. It also undertakes a feeding programme at the schools, which provides a mid-morning meal of date bars with dry skimmed milk to the schoolchildren. The children, 51 per cent of whom are girls, are aged 6 to 16 and attend a number of primary and intermediate schools in the camps. The feeding programme is a safety net mechanism and provides an incentive for maintaining the enrolment and retention of children in schools. It also aims to reduce short-term hunger among the children to increase their concentration during lessons and to enhance their learning abilities.

38. WFP also constructs or rehabilitates storage facilities and distribution points within each camp. Frequent training programmes in the logistics, monitoring and handling of nutrition activities are delivered to enhance the capacity of the refugees.

Annex

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean: meetings and/or workshops attended by representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories during 2011-2013

Name/description of meeting/seminar	*Participating associate members*
Regional workshop on the System for the Retrieval of Census Data for Small Areas by Microcomputer and web server applications development for data dissemination, Saint Lucia, 2-12 August 2011	British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands
Regional evaluation workshop on strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices in the Caribbean small island developing States to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals, Trinidad and Tobago, 12 December 2011	Turks and Caicos Islands
Expert group meeting on national accounts, Trinidad and Tobago, 26-28 September 2011	Anguilla, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands
Working group meeting on price statistics, Trinidad and Tobago, 13-15 October 2011	Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat
Training on price collection, validation and processing, Trinidad and Tobago, 10-12 October 2011	Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands
Expert group meeting on price statistics and national accounts: International Comparison Programme round 2011, Saint Kitts and Nevis, 26-30 March 2012	Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat
Expert group meeting on price statistics, Aruba, 27-30 August 2012	Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands
Expert group meeting on price statistics and national accounts: International Comparison Programme round 2011, Chile, 3-6 December 2012	Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands